

Sat. May 6, 1972

Mineral King Plan Called 'Disney King' for the Rich

Because I am accustomed to your moderate-progressive editorial approach it was with numb shock that I read your editorial (May 1) "Mineral King for the Many."

Your statement that "In the balance for recreation, the development of Mineral King is justified" is pure conjecture. Who is the arbiter of that which is "just" destruction of an unspoiled wilderness?

If Mineral King is "developed," it will cease being Mineral King and become something wholly other. A better title for your editorial would have been: "Disney King for Those Able to Pay."

BRAD SCHRAM
Santa Barbara

The Times editorial appeared to be a fairly well balanced report of a controversial situation. Too bad the balance was upset by the editorial opinion that development of this beautiful area is justified.

Could the editorial opinion be changed if it was pointed out that the official name for the area is Sequoia National Game Refuge? And that the name of the game is not golf, tennis, curio shops, a hotel and restaurants; but rather native wildlife with its own natural eco-system?

JOHN J. OLLEY
Reseda

I was glad to see you "recognize the legitimate doubts" and "some worries" that the development of Mineral King by Walt Disney Enterprises would destroy, not improve the area. But how will the public interest be served by turning over another portion of our dwindling wilderness for growth and profit? Who's going to be able to afford a

weekend at the shiny new resort?

Mineral King does indeed have "unique value" as a recreational area. And that is in its quiet, unspoiled beauty. (The handful of cabins there could hardly be called a development.)

Mineral King Valley is too small to handle 14,000 visitors a day. Facilities to accommodate this mass would kill the valley.

The "natural bowls" above the valley are all studded with exquisite alpine lakes. These are part of the wilderness areas. Considerable blasting and bulldozing would be required to establish "ski centers." This would scar the land beyond repair.

Now is the time to consider what we will be giving up. Once we allow the developers to take away the land it is gone forever.

MOLLY WILLCOX
Llano

Who will reforest the hundreds of forest acres that will be stripped to supply the building materials necessary for this huge development? And worse yet, what kind of precedent will this development set, leading to a growing demand for such recreation facilities in other wilderness areas?

MR. AND MRS. JAMES PLEYTE
Santa Monica

When The Times thinks of "balanced" recreation for the many, it should assess the needs of the many in all the coming, growing, generations. We can always create skiing facilities. We can never create wilderness resources — only preserve them.

GARY S. GREEN
Santa Monica

2023.009.0160